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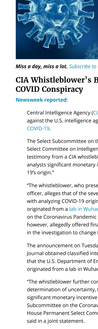
CIA Whistleblower's Bombshell Claim About COVID Conspiracy + More

The Defender's COVID NewsWatch provides a roundup of the latest headlines related to the SARS-CoV-2 virus, including its origins and COVID-19 vaccines. The views expressed in the excerpts from other news sources do not necessarily reflect the views of The Defender.

By The Defender Staff



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CIA Whistleblower's Bombshell Claim About COVID Conspiracy

Newsweek reported:

The National Intelligence Agency (CIA) whistleblower made bombshell claims against the U.S. intelligence agency on Tuesday relating to the origins of COVID-19.

The Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic and Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence announced the whistleblower had heard testimony from a CIA whistleblower who alleged that the CIA "offered six analysts significant monetary incentives to change their position on COVID-19's origin."

"The whistleblower, who presents as a highly credible senior-level CIA officer, alleges that of the seven members assigned to the CIA team tasked with analyzing COVID-19 origins, six officers concluded that the virus likely originated from a lab in Wuhan, China," the House's Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic said in a press release. "The CIA, then, however, allegedly offered financial incentives to six of the experts involved in the investigation to change their conclusion in favor of a zoonotic origin."

The announcement on Tuesday comes several months after the Wall Street Journal obtained classified intelligence reports in February, which found that the U.S. Department of Energy determined that COVID-19 likely originated from a lab in Wuhan, China.

"The whistleblower further contends that to come to the eventual public determination of uncertainty, the other six members were given a significant monetary incentive to change their position," House's Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic Chairman Jim Clyburn and House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence Chairman Mike Turner said in a joint statement.

CDC Recommends Updated COVID Vaccines for Everyone 6 Months and Older

CNN Health reported:

Everyone ages 6 months and older should get an updated COVID-19 vaccine, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Tuesday, to help lower the risk of severe illness, hospitalization or death from the coronavirus.

Dr. Mandy Cohen, director of the agency, signed off on recommendations from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices or ACIP, a panel of experts that advises the CDC on its vaccine recommendations.

The CDC said in a news release that the shots from Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna will be available this week.

Additionally, clinical trial data presented Tuesday on the effectiveness of the updated vaccines didn't include children under 12, which left ACIP member Dr. Pablo Sanchez, a pediatrician at Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, Ohio, uncomfortable with a blanket recommendation for everyone 6 months and older. He was the committee's only no vote.

Fauci's COVID Vaccine Comments Spark Furious Backlash: 'Prison Now'

Newsweek reported:

Comments made by Dr. Anthony Fauci about the updated COVID-19 vaccine have sparked a backlash on social media, falsely claiming that he had admitted for the first time that it is linked to myocarditis.

Fauci appeared on ABC's This Week on Sunday after the Food and Drug Administration approved the newest shots from Moderna and Pfizer for most Americans. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Tuesday recommended that virtually all Americans should get the new vaccine, which is expected to be available within days.

In Sunday's interview, Fauci said that there was a risk of myocarditis with the vaccine but added that it was very low. Myocarditis is an inflammation of the heart muscle, most commonly caused by an infection in the body, that can lead to chest pain, shortness of breath and heart palpitations. Most cases are self-resolving, according to a John Hopkins cardiologist.

Fauci spoke about the risk of myocarditis from COVID-19 vaccines in an October 2021 interview with NPR. Younger children "are at risk, but a very, very, very rare risk," he said in that interview. "I mean, the myocarditis that has been seen as a rare adverse event is ... predominantly in young men, not generally as young as 5 to 11, but there certainly could be some overlap there."

COVID Vaccine Manufacturers Set List Price Between $120–$130 per Dose

Reuters reported:

U.S. COVID vaccine manufacturers set list prices for their shots between $120 and $130 per dose, company executives said at an advisory panel meeting of U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Tuesday.

Pfizer (PFE.N) and German partner BioNTech (22UAy.DE) set the list price at $120 per dose, while Moderna (MRNA.O) said the list price for its shot is $129 per dose, for their respective COVID vaccines.

Novavax (NVAX.O) said the list price for its COVID vaccine was $130 per dose.

Fox News Hits Awkward Silence Over Host's COVID Vaccine Status

Newsweek reported:

Fox News viewers were hit with an awkward silence during a discussion between The Five hosts Jeanine Pirro and Jesse Tarlov about the coronavirus vaccine on Tuesday.

Discussing the responsibilities of social media firms' content moderation policies around coronavirus misinformation, the two hosts butted heads when Tarlov said that the COVID-19 vaccine is safe — and that Pirro, who scoffed at the remark, had received one.

Previously, Pirro had said she would not take the coronavirus vaccine. Speaking on the YouTube show London Real in August 2020, she said: "You know, until you tell me that that vaccine is safe — and only time will tell — until you tell me what the long-term consequences of that vaccine are, I'm not interested in putting it in my body."

Public Less Concerned About New COVID Variants: Survey

The Hill reported:

Americans are less concerned about newer variants of COVID-19 in comparison to 2021, according to a new poll.

A CBS/YouGov poll found that 48% of Americans say they are "somewhat" or "very" concerned about the variants. This is in contrast to the level of concern in late 2021 when 58% were concerned about Omicron.

The survey results also show that only 45% of Americans are concerned about getting COVID or their families being exposed to the virus. This is more than a 30% drop since the height of the pandemic, when between 68% and 77% said the same, according to the poll.

Other findings in the research included a majority of the respondents saying they would not get an updated booster shot this fall, at 57%. Forty-three percent of the respondents said they would get it.

ICON to Partner With U.S. Government Agency to Test COVID Vaccine Candidates

Reuters reported:

Contract research firm ICON Plc (ICLR.O) said on Wednesday it is partnering with the U.S. government for a clinical trial to test the effectiveness of next-generation COVID-19 vaccine candidates.

As part of the collaboration with the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority, ICON will conduct a mid-stage trial of 10,000 participants to assess the efficacy of a next-generation COVID-19 vaccine relative to currently available shots.

The U.S. agency will select the vaccine candidate for the trial. The trial is part of a $5 billion U.S. government initiative called "Project NextGen", which aims to provide better protection from coronaviruses, including the one that causes COVID-19.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration on Monday authorized updated COVID-19 vaccines from Pfizer (PFE.N)/BioNTech (22UAy.DE) and Moderna (MRNA.O) that target the XBB.1.5 subvariant of the virus.

Vaccine Skeptics Dominate South Carolina Pandemic Preparation Meeting as COVID Cases Rise

Associated Press reported:

A meeting Tuesday of South Carolina lawmakers considering how to best counter future pandemics was dominated by vaccine skeptics pushing concerns about COVID-19 immunizations that are unaccepted by the greater medical community.

Members of the all-Republican panel seeking more independence from federal health regulators were receptive to speakers who sewed doubt about vaccine safety and efficacy, as well as distrust in the scientific establishment. Testimony began with an hourlong presentation from Aaron Siri, the managing partner at a New York law firm that 2021 tax filings show received $3 million from an influential Texas-based group that campaigns against vaccine requirements.

While the FDA has not approved the use of ivermectin to prevent COVID-19, Republican state Sen. Tom Corbin said "We all know now" that it works. Corbin, who chairs the six-person committee, wanted more information on the side effects of COVID-19 vaccines.

"If the scientists can proclaim that the vaccination is safe and effective, we can also proclaim that the VAERS (Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System) is underreported," said Corbin, referring to the national program co-managed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and FDA that monitors adverse reactions to vaccines.

COVID: New 'Pirola' Variant BA.2.86 Continues to Spread in U.K. and U.S.

The BMJ reported:

The new BA.2.86 variant of SARS-CoV-2 — nicknamed "Pirola" — is now likely to be spreading in the community in the U.K., the government has said after an outbreak was reported at a care home.

The variant, which contains many mutations to the spike gene and was first detected in Denmark in late July, has been identified in several countries including Canada, Israel, Portugal, South Africa, and Sweden, as well as the U.K. and the U.S.

In the U.S. the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) had reported cases of the variant in nine states as of September 8. Despite this, it has been said that the current increases in COVID-19 cases and hospital admissions "are not being driven by BA.2.86 and instead are being caused by other predominantly circulating viruses."

U.S. Jobless Aid Programs Bilked of up to $135 Billion During COVID, Watchdog Says

Reuters reported:

Up to $135 billion of jobless benefits paid out by U.S. states during the coronavirus pandemic may have arisen from fraudulent claims, Washington's top government watchdog said on Tuesday in a report suggesting the problem is much bigger than previously estimated.

Waves of fraudulent claims for unemployment insurance benefits have episodically inflated the volumes of new filings reported each week to the Labor Department by all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, often confounding economists tracking the data for a read on the health of the job market.

But a new General Accountability Office report estimates the problem is much bigger. Between $100 billion and $135 billion of the roughly $900 billion in jobless benefits payouts from April 2020 through May 2021 may have been fraudulent. At the high end, that would equal about $1 of every $7 paid in aid over that time.

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I tried to multiply $1720 X "virtually all Americans", but my calculator started smoking and short-circuited. With that kind of money you can buy all the congressmen, and mainstream media publicity you need to get the job done.
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dve22
4 days ago
If they had kept the jobless benefits program the way it used to be, there wouldn't have been this huge problem. But give everyone the 'gift' of $600 extra a week, and of course there will be fraud. And fewer people seeking work.
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Vlad Reginal
4 days ago
I am sure Trudeau's corrupted regime wasted more billions of $$ for the 'new' transfecting coctails than necessary. Some will go for it, the rest of vials will end up in the ground. Trudeau spends like there is no tomorrow. He totally ruined the country.
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